

Remarks

Applicant requests reconsideration and allowance of this application in view of the foregoing amendment and the following remarks.

By the present amendment, claims 1-4, 6-7, and 9-14 are canceled. Claims 5 and 8 are amended. New claims 18-21 are presented. Pending claims 5, 8, and 18-21 are respectfully submitted to be allowable.

Claim 5 is amended to more clearly describe the invention and is submitted to be allowable over the prior art of record. Specifically, the primary reference, Sagel, does not disclose first and second latching portions on first and second side rails of a second platform section, each latching portion having a latching chamber for receiving a latching tongue and having a latch pin movable in the latching chamber. Sagel also does not disclose that each one of the latch pins of the second section moves into engagement in a latch opening in the associated latching tongue of the first section, to block movement of the first section away from the second section.

Nor is this structure found in the cited secondary references. In Hay et al., the hinge H shown in Fig. 4A is not adapted to be separated then reassembled. Rather, it has a hinge pin 40 about which one section 24 pivots relative to the other section 24. In addition, release and adjustment require a manual retraction of sleeve 47 in order to move pin 42 out of one opening 34 or 36 and into the other opening 34 or 36.

In Grant, the lock 49 functions upon pivoting movement of the two bed parts, rather than sliding movement. In addition, the lock is not adapted to be operable for use in assembling and disassembling two discrete platform sections. Further, the lock 49 does not include a tongue that moves into a latch chamber, and a separate (from the tongue) latch pin that moves into a latch opening in the tongue, as specified in claim 7.

In Carroll et al., the mechanism shown in Fig. 11 is used for mounting removable legs to the bed platform section. There is a pin 101 which must be placed, and a pin 103 which must be manually inserted into an opening in a member 102. This is not a

mechanism that provides for engagement simply by sliding two sections together; it must be carefully, manually positioned and assembled.

For these reasons, the suggested combination of Sagel with Hay et al or Grant or Carroll et al. would not meet the limitations of claim 5. In addition, the references do not contain a motivation for, or teaching of, the proposed combination. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claim 5 is allowable.

Each one of claims 18 and 19 is dependent from claim 5 and allowable at least for the same reasons as claim 5. In addition, each one of claims 18 and 19 adds further features and limitations that provide separate bases for patentability. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claims 18 and 19 are allowable.

Independent method claim 8 as amended is respectfully submitted to be allowable over the references of record. Claim 8 specifies first latching mechanisms of a first platform section engaging respective second latching mechanisms of a second platform section upon relative sliding movement in the first direction between the first section and the second section. Claim 8 also specifies that each one of the latch pins of the second platform section moves transversely away from and then into engagement in a latch opening in an associated first latching mechanism, to block movement of the first section away from the second section.

It is respectfully submitted that this method of operation is not shown in the primary reference Sagel. Nor is it shown in the secondary references, as discussed above with reference to claim 5. In addition, the references do not contain a motivation for, or teaching of, such a combination. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claim 8 is allowable.

Claim 20 is dependent from claim 8 and is allowable at least for the same reasons as claim 8. In addition, claim 20 specifies that the step of moving the inner end portion of the first section and the inner end portion of the second section in a first direction into engagement with each other while they are horizontal comprises engaging each latch pin of a second latching mechanism with a tongue of a first latching mechanism, and camming the latch pin transversely away from the tongue. This method of operation is

not shown in or suggested by the references. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claim 20 is allowable.

New independent claim 21 specifies first latching mechanisms on side rails of a first platform section engaging respective second latching mechanisms on side rails of a second platform section upon relative sliding movement between the first section and the second section. Claim 21 also specifies that each one of the latch pins of the second platform section moves transversely away from and then into engagement in a latch opening in an associated first latching mechanism, to block movement of the first section away from the second section.

This structure is not shown in the primary reference Sagel. Sagel does not show a latch pin on a second latching mechanism of a side rail. Nor does Sagel show a latch pin that moves transversely away from and then into engagement in a latch opening in an associated first latching mechanism, to block movement of the first section away from the second section.

The structure of claim 21 also is not shown in the secondary references, as discussed above with reference to claim 8.. In addition, the references do not contain a motivation for, or teaching of, such a combination. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claim 21 is allowable.

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Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance, and notice to that effect is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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